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C O N F I D E N T I A L

3 November 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Reference

SUBJECT: COSATI Meeting, 19 October 1966
                            Farewell Luncheon, 27 October 1966

Summary. This was Bill Knox's last meeting as chairman. He joins McGraw Hill
1 November 1966.

1. Bill Knox announced that this was his last appearance as Chairman of
COSATI. He felt proud that COSATI is now well known throughout this country and
in fact around the world. At the same time, he admits that he is no longer known
as an individual and never as a member of the Office of Science & Technology, but
always in connection with his COSATI role. (As of this meeting, no successor
had been named.)

2. A schedule of COSATI meetings for the next 12 months was handed out.
Once again, no meeting is scheduled for the month of August.

3. A briefing paper on National Scientific and Technical Information Systems
(NASTINS) was distributed at the meeting. This paper forms the basis for a
presentation to the Federal Council at their 1 November 1966 meeting. There was
considerable discussion about the paper and great sensitivity to the overtones of
individual words. This was not just a matter of over-editing on the part of COSATI
members but rather a serious concern that senior officers who are not well informed
on the status of information handling programs may react violently when words like
"uncoordinated" and "wasted" appear, no matter how carefully they are modified.
Bert Adkinson was especially concerned about discussion of "the overall S&T area."
He said that the place to tackle overlaps is in specifics not in the overall. (There
will be some final polishing before the FCST meeting, but the pattern of the paper
will probably remain as it appears in the draft. A copy is available in Room 1H114.)

4. Walter Carlson commented that pay-as-you-go, which is a well established
trend in many commercial areas, should be more widely applied. This would be
one means of achieving better recognition of the input cost of packaging information.
With this understanding, the users--firms, agencies, projects, etc.--will be more
willing to pay the price. Ed Brunenkant dissented saying that as in the case of
schooling everyone wants it but everyone wants to get it free.

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5. Curt Fritz, still on loan to OST from State, gave a semi-formal presentation on national systems. His emphasis was on the coordination of on-going activities rather than the establishment of totally new systems. At a much later date there will doubtless be identification of gaps, some of which will justify new activities. The current estimate is that more S&T information will be handled as bits and pieces outside a national system than will be handled inside.

6. To a considerable degree the effectiveness of national systems will depend upon the definition that evolves for the term "Responsible Agent." In most cases the RA will probably be more a coordinator than an operator. RA's might be designated for a subject field, a form of information, foreign information, Federal reports, etc. Some might be user-oriented, e.g., information pertaining to hospitals. Above all, a truly national system must involve all sectors, not just the Government. In some systems there may be as many as 4 or 5 levels from the capping or central mechanism down to the actual operators of information centers. It is quite likely that some operating organizations will serve simultaneously more than one national system.

7. The RA's must find some way to use informal means of exchanging information and must not be limited to formal mechanisms. They will doubtless issue some indexes, abstract summaries, compilations, etc., and will become the coordinators of some publications prepared by others. There will be monitoring at the RA level and, of course, the central mechanism will be the overall monitor. Some functions will overlap between the central mechanism and the RA's, e.g., legislative liaison, planning of education and training, and international negotiations.

8. To insure adequate authority, there will need to be new legislation, perhaps following the example of the National Standard Reference Data System. Such legislation has passed the House and will be taken up by the Senate when Congress reconvenes.

9. One question that will have to be faced early in the game is the location of the central mechanism or capping agency. Should this be in OST? Should it be there temporarily? The size of this activity at the outset may be determined in part by practical political considerations--if it is too large, it will make an easy target for economizers. It may be wisest to concentrate on one or two subsystems at the start in order to get a more accurate estimate of the gross cost and to show by actual operation how similar networks might be set up for other sectors.

10. Ed Brunenkant reported that the Subpanel on Classified Microfiche has drafted an action paper for a supplement to the second revision of Federal Microfiche Standards. A formal action paper will be presented soon. (A copy of the draft is available.)
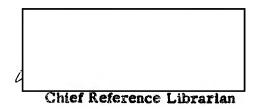
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11. He also reported that GSA is now represented on the Subpanel on Standards and that COSATI-endorsed systems may be formalized for use throughout the U.S. Government.

12. John Sherrod announced that Lee Burchinal of the Office of Education will replace him as Chairman of the Panel on Education and Training 1 November 1966. He pointed out that this is a shrewd appointment since he sits where the money is.

13. Post Script: The farewell luncheon for Bill Knox 27 October 1966 was quite a gala occasion. The guests included Dr. Hornig, Quincy Mumford, Joe Becker, Verner Clapp, Barrett of SDC, and 4 or 5 dozen others. Bill Knox announced that he is joining McGraw Hill 1 November 1966 to work on long-range planning.

Verner Clapp mentioned that his Vice President, Mel Ruggles, will be on loan for a year, starting in November 1966, to serve as staff director to the newly appointed National Advisory Commission on Libraries, headed by President Douglas M. Knight of Duke University. His office will be in the Office of Education.

Barrett of SDC mentioned the MICRO project that will index 100,000 items from open literature. This is primarily for the benefit of FTD but will have 6 or 8 consoles located elsewhere in the Department of Defense. The existing ORD link with SDC can be used for this purpose. The cost will be $30 per hour plus telephone charges. The charges are in effect only while the console is actually hooked up with the computer.

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Chief Reference Librarian

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